



TESTIMONY SUPPORTING SB-948:

AN ACT ADDRESSING EDUCATION FUNDING AND RACIAL EQUITY IN CONNECTICUT.

Education Committee March 3, 2021

Presented By: Emily Hoyle

Dear Honorable Chairpersons Sanchez and McCrory, Ranking Members McCarty and Berthel, Vice Chairs Barry and Daugherty Abrams, and all other Members of the Public Health Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

I, Emily Hoyle, am a representative of the Connecticut Women's Consortium and a resident of New Haven, CT. Today I am writing to urge you to support Senate Bill-948: *An Act Addressing Education Funding and Racial Equity in Connecticut*. For the past decade, the Consortium team has strived to provide high-quality, racially responsive behavioral education to Connecticut's therapists, social workers, and clinicians. Our journey has helped us to understand the cruciality of education equity and has inspired us as advocates for women, children, LGBTQ individuals, and the organizations that affect them.

Senate Bill-948 will address the inadequacies in Connecticut's public school funding system by prioritizing the needs of districts with concentrated poverty, districts with high-needs students, and students of color. As reported by the School + State Finance Project, Connecticut has a \$327 million funding gap between districts where the BIPOC student population is between 25 percent and 75 percent of the total enrollment and districts consisting of student populations that are over 75 percent white.¹ This, as well as the \$312 million funding gap between districts with the highest populations of BIPOC1 students and districts with the highest percentages of white students,² leads to a financial gulf of \$639 million across all districts with BIPOC student populations of at least 25 percent and districts with white student populations greater than 75 percent.³ This

¹ School + State Finance Project (2020) *Racial Disparities in Connecticut Education Funding*. Retrieved from <http://ctschoolfinance.org/resources/uploads/files/Racial-Disparities-in-CT-Education-Funding.pdf>

² School and State Finance Project. (2020). *A Student-Centered Funding System*. Retrieved from <http://ctschoolfinance.org/resources/uploads/files/Student-Centered-Funding-One-Pager.pdf>

³ School and State Finance Project. (2020). *Fact Sheet: Racial Disparities in Connecticut Education Funding*. Retrieved from <http://ctschoolfinance.org/resources/uploads/files/Racial-Disparities-in-CT-Education-Funding.pdf>

shocking disparity is largely brought on by Connecticut's over-reliance on property tax revenue and failure to moderate the Education Cost Sharing formula.⁴

The gross inequity in Connecticut's school funding undermines the potential of Connecticut's children. Among other methods, addressing the issue with additional resources for districts educating high-need students, decreasing the ECS concentrated poverty threshold from 75% to 60% in all future years, and creating a choice program grant for students attending Open Choice, inter-district magnet schools and state charter schools sets a precedent for Connecticut's willingness to put the needs of the underserved at the forefront of its education conversation. We at the Consortium support this endeavor and urge you to support a student-centered, equitable funding system.

⁴ School + State Finance Project (2020) *Racial Disparities in Connecticut Education Funding*. Retrieved from <http://ctschoolfinance.org/resources/uploads/files/Racial-Disparities-in-CT-Education-Funding.pdf>